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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 004411

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/08/2017
TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KE](#)
SUBJECT: KENYA ELECTIONS COUNTDOWN 1: 49 DAYS AWAY

REF: NAIROBI 4402

Classified By: Political Counselor Larry Andre for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: U.S. Mission Nairobi will send out over 60 observers nationwide for the party nomination process (primaries) scheduled around 16 November. Kalonzo Musyoka has until 13 November to decide if he wants to stand down in Kibaki's favor, as the presidential ballot will be set after that date. Pro-Kibaki, specifically anti-Luo, political messages are circulating on Kenyans' phones. A contact at the Foreign Ministry alerted PolCouns to the intense interest some of his colleagues are showing in the movements and conversations of Political Section staff. The son of the Internal Security and Provincial Administration Minister (who himself is an important business leader in the Kikuyu community), painted an apocalyptic picture of a potential Raila Odinga presidency and then asked PolCouns "Can't you help us rig this thing?" PolCouns declined. END SUMMARY.

U.S. Mission Prepares First Ever Primary Observation

12. (U) The U.S. Mission will send over 20 teams with over 60 observers to party nomination exercises (primaries) throughout the country. The effort concentrates on constituencies where particular parties are so strong that the primary victor is nearly assured of winning a ticket to Parliament on the 27 December general election day. PNU (pro-government) and ODM (opposition) each have over 1500 parliamentary candidate aspirants. We believe this is the first time in Kenyan history that party primaries are the subject of a formal observer mission. The primaries will take place around 16 November, with results expected to be announced on Monday, 19 November. We will launch a much larger observation mission for the general election, in close coordination with other embassies, international organizations, and Kenyan civil society organizations.

Kalonzo: Will He or Won't He? We Will Soon Know

13. (C) There is a great deal of speculation about ODM-K leader Kalonzo Musyoka's ultimate intentions. Some, including our British colleagues, believe he will shift to the Kibaki camp in return for various considerations (the

Vice Presidency for himself, a certain number of ministries for his supporters, cash). Kalonzo recently made a public declaration that he would do no such thing. But then, he also made a series of declarations earlier this year that he would never break away from ODM, which he eventually did. If Kalonzo were to back Kibaki, we believe the great majority of his voters would follow him. This would be a major setback for the Raila Odinga campaign. However, the majority of our Kenyan contacts believe Kalonzo will remain in the race to the end, and then barter the support of his members of parliament with whomever wins. None of our interlocutors believe Kalonzo would strike a deal with Raila Odinga prior to the election. The names for the presidential ballot must be received by the Electoral Commission by 13 November, so we will soon know Kalonzo's true intentions.

Hate Speech Via Telemessaging

¶4. (U) PolCouns contacts have forwarded anti-Raila Odinga phone messages circulating in Kenya. To convey the degree in which ethnic prejudices are influencing Kenyan politics, three of these messages are repeated below:

"Some Luos will die during campaigns, others during voting, and many more during celebrations if Raila wins. Save Luos from this disaster, vote Kibaki in."

"For Jaramogi Oginga Odinga so hated Kenya that he gave his only son Raila Odinga that whosoever believes in him shall live in eternal slavery, and have everlasting poverty, hunger, disease and die in pain. Look at Kibera. Look at Nyanza. We do not need Kiberas and Nyanzas in Kenya."

(NOTE: Jaramogi Oginga Odinga was one of Kenya's founding fathers. Kibera is a large slum in Nairobi predominantly inhabited by Luos and represented in parliament by Raila Odinga. Nyanza is the home province of the Luo people. End Note.)

Pol Officers: Never Lonely

¶5. (C) A senior contact at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs accurately quoted back to PolCouns a conversation that took place during a recent reporting trip to Coast Province (reftel). The MFA interlocutor went on to say "in the past it was only us in MFA who kept tabs on you guys. Now the others are doing so as well, listening and following." We take "others" to mean the domestic intelligence outfit. PolCouns related this conversation to relevant embassy colleagues, who will report further septel.

"Can't You Help Us Rig this Thing?"

¶6. (C) Francis Michuki, son of Internal Affairs and Provincial Administration minister John Michuki (in charge of the police and provincial officials), predicted that a Raila Odinga presidency would transform Kenya into an economic basket case, an extreme dictatorship and a source of instability for the entire region. He then made a pitch to PolCouns that "You Americans say you are friends of Kenya. If you are, then help prevent this disaster from happening. Can't you help us rig this thing?" PolCouns declined, pointing out that the race is too close to call, and some effort and organization, along with an end to constant in-fighting, by the President's supporters would have a payoff at the polls, legitimately. PolCouns also pointed out that our policy calls for free, transparent, credible and peaceful elections. Michuki repeated his request a few days later, prompting another PolCouns turndown. Michuki is a successful and influential business leader.

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